

Beh'azin

1915–

Translator, fiction writer, and political activist Mahmud E'temadzadeh, better known by his pen name Beh'azin, was born and raised in Rasht. After high school, he traveled to France on a government scholarship to study engineering. Upon his return to Iran in 1938, he worked in the Iranian Navy and the Ministry of Education, then got involved in the Tudeh Party, and subsequently pursued a career in translation from French into Persian.

Beh'azin's first collection of short stories, *Parākandeh* (Scattered pieces), appeared in 1944. In 1948 a second collection of stories was published called *Be-su-ye mardom* (Toward the people). In 1951 Beh'azin's novella called *Dokhtar-e ra'iyat* (The serf's daughter) appeared. Its tale of class struggle in Gilan during the early years of the twentieth century typifies Beh'azin's leftist views and established him as a major writer in the eyes of engagé critics.

Beh'azin's third and most critically acclaimed collection of short stories was *Mobreh-ye mār* (The snake stone), published in 1966. In 1970 came a fourth collection of short stories called *Shabr-e khodā* (God's city). But by the 1970s, Beh'azin's resolve to engage in oppositionist political activism led to several periods of incarceration and a diminution in his literary productivity. He wrote a book called *Mehmān-e in āqāyān* (Guest of these gentlemen, 1970) about one period of incarceration and *Ān su-ye divār: goftār dar āzādī* (On the other side of the wall: a statement on freedom, 1977).

During the Revolution of 1978-79, Beh'azin was a leading voice for Marxist Tudeh Party views. In the mid-1980s, the Islamic Republic put him and other Tudeh Party leaders in jail, where some of them remained as of the early 1990s.

His latest fictional work is *Māngdim va khorshid chehr* (Māngdim and the sun-faced one), a collection of seven short stories published in 1990. In 1991 his study of Rumi, *Bar daryā-kenār-e Masnavi*, was published, as well as a volume of memoirs, *Az har dari--: zendagināmeb-e seyāsi-ejtemāi*. This was followed in 1998 by another memoir *Sāyeh'hā-ye bāgh*.